



FACT SHEET

Consumer Labeling Initiative (CLI)

We all use chemical products in our homes and gardens. It is up to us to choose the right products for our needs, use them safely, store them properly, and dispose of them with the least possible effect on the environment. The Consumer Labeling Initiative (CLI) can help.

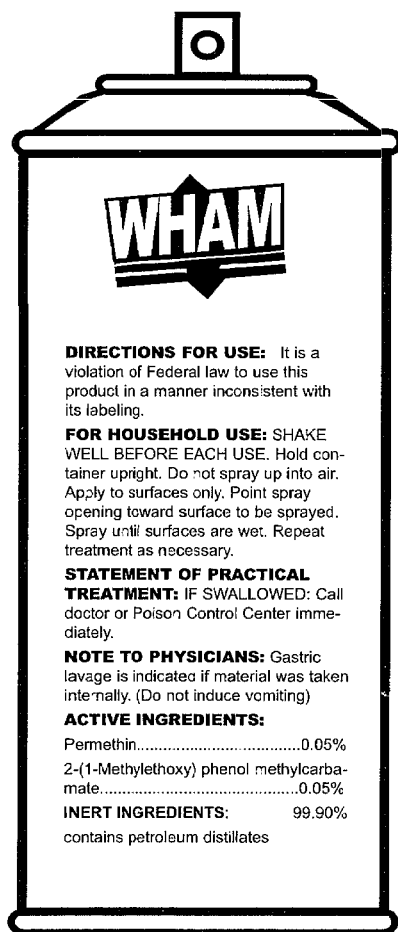
Background

Many household products such as cleaners and pesticides could harm children, pets or the environment if we don't use and store them correctly. Product labels contain valuable use instructions and precautions which can help consumers keep their families, pets, and communities safe. Since the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that label information is often difficult to read and understand, EPA announced the Consumer Labeling Initiative (CLI) in March 1996. CLI is a voluntary, cooperative partnership among federal, state, and local government agencies, industry, and other interested groups working to improve product labels on indoor insecticides, outdoor pesticides, and household hard surface cleaners. CLI's goals are to foster pollution prevention, empower consumer choice, and improve consumer understanding of information on household consumer product labels.

Objectives

- Learn directly from consumers how to provide the label information they want and need.
- Make essential safe and appropriate use, environmental, and health information on household product labels easier to find, read, understand, and use.
- Help consumers make informed product choices — based on their own needs and values — and use, store, and dispose of products safely.
- Encourage consumers to "Read the Label *FIRST!*" in order to prevent pollution and reduce risks to health.

BEFORE



User Friendly Labels: Simpler Language, Clearer Format

Presenting label information in an easier to read format (e.g. bullets for easier reading, more white space on labels, boxes to highlight important text).

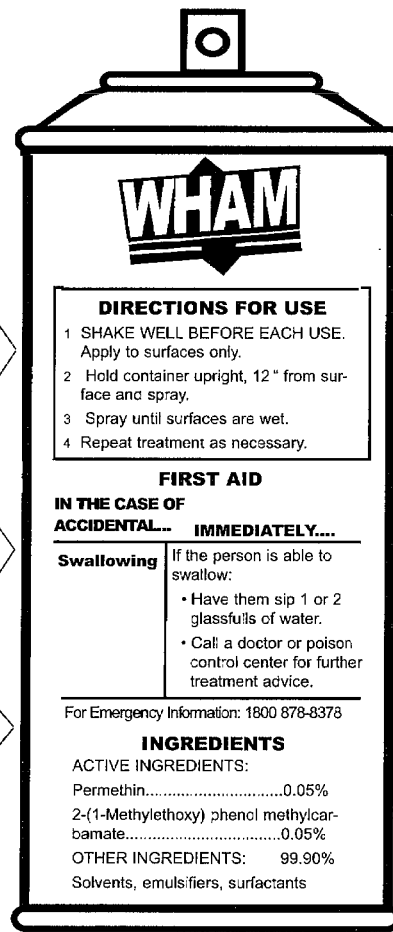
Replacing the phrase "Statement of Practical Treatment" with "First Aid."

Clarifying first aid statements and putting them into a tabular format.

Listing the common names for product ingredients instead of the chemical names, and allowing a description of "other ingredients."

NOTE: The "after" label represents changes based on proposed CLI recommendations. It is not an EPA approved label.

AFTER



CLI's Product Categories

- ◆ Indoor insecticides
- ◆ Outdoor pesticides
- ◆ Household hard surface cleaners

CLI Phase II: Findings

Consumers strongly preferred certain revised statements over the existing label language. Examples include:

- "Do not use where product may seep into ground water" (96.1% preferred) versus "Do not use where soils are permeable" (3.9% preferred).
- "Application may injure woody plants" (97.4% preferred) versus "Phytotoxic to woody plants" (2.6% preferred).

Read the Label *FIRST!* to find out how to:

- ◆ Buy the right product for the job in the right amount.
- ◆ Use a product properly.
- ◆ Protect personal health, family, and pets.
- ◆ Store and dispose of a product correctly.
- ◆ Prevent pollution and protect the environment.

Research Process

To find out what label changes would benefit consumers most, CLI conducted consumer research in two phases. Phase I, completed in September 1996, asked consumers questions about how they read and use product labels. This included 135 in-depth one-on-one interviews with users of products in each of three product categories — indoor insecticides, outdoor pesticides, and household hard surface cleaners — in five major cities across the United States. The research also included a literature review of existing publications related to labeling and a review of extensive public comments solicited by the March 1996 Federal Register notice.

The CLI Phase I Report (#EPA-700-R-96-001), which was published September 1996, presents these findings in detail. The Report is available on CLI's web site: www.epa.gov/opptintr/labeling.

In Phase II of the research, the Agency's industry and trade association partners conducted a nationwide, quantitative survey designed in cooperation with all of the CLI project participants. The Spring 1998 survey tested the learnings from Phase I, explored alternatives to existing label language, and established a baseline of current consumer behavior with respect to labels. Further focus group research was performed with a diverse range of consumers to test possible label format and language changes. CLI also explored how to provide consistent storage and disposal information that would be flexible enough to take local recycling and waste management programs into account. Look for the Phase II Report, detailing research and findings, on the CLI web site.

Label Changes

Based on the findings from Phases I and II, EPA has recommended wording and format changes making labels easier to read and use. Examples of recommended label changes include:

- Eliminating jargon and overly technical words.
- Replacing the phrase "Statement of Practical Treatment" with "First Aid."
- Clarifying first aid statements.
- Presenting label information in an easier-to-read format (e.g., by providing language in bulleted and boxed formats).

Examples of recommended label changes can be seen on the *WHAM* product on the front of this fact sheet. Many of these label changes can be seen on products in stores now.

Nationwide Consumer Education Campaign

Now that labels are changing, CLI has launched a nationwide "Read the Label *FIRST!*" consumer education campaign. This effort will encourage consumers to read the information on product labels. The goal of this campaign is to help consumers purchase, use, and dispose of products more safely and effectively.

For more information on the CLI, or to order publications, contact:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Pollution Prevention Clearinghouse (PPIC)

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Or visit the CLI Web site at: www.epa.gov/opptintr/labeling

